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NEW HOPE FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL COMMUNICATION?

ACCESS TO INFORMATION: RECORDING AND RETRIEVAL

THE SEARCH FOR PHYSICAL EVIDENCE - PART 1

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE UFO INVESTIGATION GROUP

THE TUNGUSKA METEORITE

DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF UFO JOURNALS

SKYWATCHING AND SELF-DECEPTION

"SILENCERS" IN ENGLAND

EDITORIAL

Condon Report - As Predicted

The Condon Report has now been published. We have not yet seen a copy, but we understand that it is just as predicted by ufologists everywhere. It is long (1,465 pages) and gives the impression, at first glance, of concluding that the UFO problem is not important.

Also - as predicted - it concludes that we are not being visited by alien space-craft, but its authors go further. They state: "We consider it safe to assume that no I.L.E. (intelligent life elsewhere) outside our solar system has any possibility of visiting Earth in the next 10,000 years." As for how they arrived at that figure, your guess is as good as ours. This statement is a good example of what Dr Hynek termed "cosmic provincialism".

The long-predicted storm over the report has already broken out in the U.S.A., with Major Keyhoe loudly denouncing it as yet another Air Force whitewash.

Although the Report may turn out to contain interesting information, the reported conclusions are unlikely to be taken seriously by ufologists, whatever their views on the subject. Confidence in the Condon Committee has been continually sapped by the antics and attitudes of some of its members and, notably, the publication of Robert Low's notorious memo.

We will make further comments on the report when more details are available.

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NEW HOPE FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL COMMUNICATION?

by P.E.Hopkins

Ever since Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity, theoretical evidence has been weighted against any body travelling with a velocity faster than that of light. In other words, the velocity of light, about 186,000 miles per second, is considered as being the ceiling velocity that a body or particle may attain.

The simple explanation of this phenomenon is that as a body is accelerated towards the speed of light, the mass of the body increases, and thus more energy is required to maintain the acceleration of the body. Such a process forms a vicious circle represented by Einstein's equation $E = MC^2$, where E is energy, M is mass and C is a constant, the speed of light. As Einstein said concerning velocities greater than that of light: "They have no possibility of existence."

It is obvious that such a law of science limits space exploration in a very negative manner. Consider the nearest star, Alpha Centauri, which lies approximately four and a half light years distant from the Earth. Such a journey to Alpha Centauri in a hypothetical rocket that could travel at the speed of light would take nine years for the round trip. Since rockets will never be able to attain the speed of light because of the energy/mass relationship the journey would take many times longer. The undertaking of such a journey by conventional standards would be impossible.

Radio links with extraterrestrial civilisations would also be a long drawn out process since radio waves travel with practically the same velocity ~~as~~ as light. Should our astronomers locate an advanced civilisation in the neighbourhood of, say, Epsilon Eridani a message beamed from the Earth would take eleven and a half years to reach its destination. The answer to our message would be received twenty-three years after the original transmission. Under such conditions one tends to ask whether such a link would be of any value, apart from the extreme cost and difficulty involved in searching for such a civilisation. The modern trend in scientific thinking is that the Earth is one of millions of inhabited planets in a universe teeming with life, and yet we are isolated beyond all comprehension.

Now the revolutionary theory of an American physicist, Dr Gerald Fienberg, of Columbia University, may change our whole concept of the universe. He has postulated the existence of a new particle, the tachyon (from a Greek word meaning 'swift') which he believes permeates the universe travelling in some cases with almost infinite velocity, which it achieves by losing energy as it gains velocity. Dr Fienberg's hypothesis itself derives from the basis of Einstein's equations and at least appears plausible to some theoretical physicists.

Attempts to detect the tachyon have so far failed. It can only exist above the speed of light and it may not be electrically charged. Consequently the task of developing a suitable technique for detecting it is very difficult indeed.

Should Dr Fienberg discover the tachyon, then the dreams of science fiction writers may well come true. It could provide a tool for instantly communicating across the vast reaches of space and time. Actual space travel at or above the speed of light would still remain an impossibility, but tachyon beams might be able to transfer energy over tremendous distances--something that is at present impossible due to the inverse square law. Still, the possibility of communicating with an extraterrestrial civilisation via a tachyon beam is an exciting prospect that could either bring

great benefits to mankind, or complete destruction through misuse. Let us hope that Dr Fienberg's search will not be fruitless.

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ACCESS TO INFORMATION: RECORDING AND RETRIEVAL

by John A. Rimmer

The July-August issue of this Bulletin published a short list of UFO periodicals held in public libraries, and asked for information about unlisted library holdings. The lack of response to this appeal, and investigations subsequently carried out, would indicate that there is very little UFO literature available in the public library service, especially periodical literature. Most of the works on ufology in the public libraries are of the popular type from the large commercial publishers, which most serious researchers already have in their private collections, and which are of limited value to anybody attempting an in depth study of any particular facet of the UFO problem. The need is, then, for some centrally organized system of making available a much wider range of information sources than is currently accessible in the public libraries, particularly in regard to the information that is published in group journals, small privately published works, and independently produced UFO magazines.

Most UFO groups maintain a library, varying from small collections of a few paperbacks and magazines to large, comprehensive and well organized collections. Collectively all these libraries must contain a major proportion of all British published UFO literature, and a considerable proportion of overseas material. However the value of this is largely wasted, being only available to the members of a particular group. Even when groups are willing to lend material from their libraries (and understandably not all groups are willing to do this, having learned from bitter experience the danger of loss, damage and downright theft) there remains the problem of knowing in which library any particular piece of material is held.

Even when material is readily available there is a considerable problem in putting it to practical use, and using it for obtaining specific information, rather than just a particular booklet or issue of a periodical. There is no way in which a researcher, investigating, say, the physical evidence of UFO landing reports, can obtain a list of references to information in UFO journals. At the moment such items can only be traced through the researcher's personal knowledge of the literature, references from fellow researchers, and other rather haphazard methods. Only in one field of the subject is there any efficient form of information retrieval. This is the Cambridge and London Universities' computer record of UFO sighting reports, which enables ready access to all known facts about these reports. However such direct analysis of sighting reports is now only a small, and some would say a diminishing, part of total UFO investigation. There is no guiding or indexing system to the great bulk of UFO literature, and more especially to the findings and conclusions of earlier researchers on aspects of UFO problems.

Contrast this now to the situation that exists in other studies in science and the humanities. Here there is a wide and comprehensive system of indexing and abstracting services, which provide the needed bibliographical details that pinpoint the sources of required information. Such publications as "Chemical Abstracts", "Physical Abstracts", "Art Index" cover a wide range of publications in their chosen fields, carefully selecting all material that is of value, and giving references directly back to the original publication.

What then can be done to provide similar facilities to the serious ufologist? The first need is for some sort of centralized national clearing-house for the interlending of material. This could be patterned on the Regional Library Bureaux that provide such a service for Britain's public libraries. Based on nine regional centres, these bureaux maintain a complete catalogue of library stocks in their areas, so that any book can be traced to the libraries that hold copies. Any library seeking a particular book is thus able to borrow it from another library through the RLB headquarters. Now, in the context of UFO research, could such a system be established? Firstly by the creation of a National Union Catalogue. UFO groups participating in the scheme would send details, in a standardized form, to the central clearing-house. Secondly by the development of some viable system of interlending. This would be done basically by direct postal lending of material. The central bureau would maintain a detailed record of all loan transactions, to provide a safeguard against any danger of loss, damage or theft. For particularly scarce or valuable material there could be some system of cash deposits. It would be advisable for the bureau to have access to Xerox, photocopying and microfilm equipment. Such a system would obviously require a certain amount of money, which would have to be provided from a levy on groups using the services.

The problem of the provision of a national UFO catalogue and interlending system is largely one of the mechanics of the operation. With an adequate amount of money and group co-operation such a system could be built up in a comparatively short period of time. It is in the second requirement, that of a workable system of information retrieval, that there is the need for a large amount of detailed and original work. The ideal would be a large "Index of UFO Literature", covering all the main UFO periodicals in English, and as comprehensively as possible in other languages. This would then be kept up to date with a periodical supplement, covering current literature as it is published. It would seem to be, however, that this ideal is now probably beyond reach, at least as far as indexing all the extant material is concerned. The most that can be hoped for is the indexing of the larger and more important periodicals, where there is access to adequate files, which are in some instances already indexed. Similarly in the surveying of current publications there will be some small, ephemeral newssheets that will slip through even the most efficient indexing net. However, for the most part, any good indexing organization should be able to record all that is of value to researchers.

It would be impossible in the present state of UFO study in this country to operate a central indexing system similar to the centralized interlending system, as this would require a full time staff and considerable funds, even just for the purchase of an adequate supply of source material. It seems inevitable then that the work on such an index would have to be spread, even on an international scale. It would be essential under these circumstances to maintain a strong degree of consistency in the operation of the system. The indexing and abstracting journals mentioned above are all based on various schemes of classification to provide the basic structure of the index. The most familiar system of literature classification in the English speaking world is the Dewey Decimal Classification, which is used by about 80% of British libraries, and a development of it, the Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) which is particularly suited to scientific and technical libraries. These systems are constructed so that any book or periodical article can generally be catalogued at one and only one place in the scheme. This ensures almost total consistency, and in most cases a book will be classified in the same way in every library using the system. If a classification system is used for UFO material, it would mean that a co-ordinated indexing system could be operated by a wide-ranging group of people, whilst maintaining an objective and unbiased basis that is essential in such a contentious subject as ufology.

When such a classification scheme is produced, potential indexers would be instructed in its use, and a co-ordinating centre would be established to collate the work of the various people, allocate the work amongst the competent indexers, and publish the finished indexes at regular intervals.

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From: Mr ARTHUR SHUTTLEWOOD

Seriously, though, we are all unpaid questers for ultimate truths in this unique field of research: so I cannot comprehend why there is a strong element of cross-purpose and unhealthy argument (which is negative and not constructive) between people who (1) definitely believe in the existence of UFOs; and (2) should pool their resources and brain power in resolving as many angles of the overall enigma as is possible.

In your book write-up (thank you kindly, by the way) you refer to the May 27-28 skywatch as though it was of importance. I did not deal with it because--on sensible reflection--I agreed that this was a lightning phenomenon and not remotely connected with the "Thing". It was a weekend among many, to us, and had no relevance to ufological advancement. Hope you did not get too wet, anyway? We are "wet" enough already, in the eyes and minds of most people, unfortunately. I don't think we can go very far wrong if we are sincere in our seeking: and no MIB will deter our team, anyway! There is a hostile factor, but it is mainly earthbound...

I wonder, incidentally, whether Alan Sharp has had any reason or cause to change his views that earth science and measurements can fully explain all connecting with the mystery of UFOs. One can certainly be too dogmatic, and therein lies obtuseness which is just as dangerous as complete gullibility over any data coming to light.

Thank you for your mag. It's quite bright, even if a little pedestrian in attitude towards things I consider matter most. Look out of your window: cars, houses, road, clothing, shops and their varied wares... every one of these material things has first had its birth in the mind or spirit. Therefore the spiritual domain is far more important and relevant in all things than the physical. Think it over. Walk in peace. Truly, Arthur Shuttlewood, 17 Portway, Warminster, Wiltshire.

THE SEARCH FOR PHYSICAL EVIDENCE

by John Harney

PART ONE

Introduction

Since 1947, the hypothesis that UFOs are spaceships from other planets has been popular. Accordingly, many ufologists have devoted much time and effort to attempts to obtain physical evidence of such visitations. Physical evidence can take many forms and, unfortunately for the protagonists of the interplanetary spaceships theory, can be subject to many different interpretations.

In this series an attempt is made to review some of the physical evidence and alleged physical evidence which has come to light during the past twenty years. There is no doubt that, during this period, ufologists have come across a certain amount of physical evidence during their researches--but physical evidence of what?

The Types of Evidence to be Considered

In this series we will confine our attentions to the following types of evidence, real or alleged:

1. Substances or objects said to have been jettisoned by, ejected by, or fallen from, UFOs.
2. Reports of captured UFOs and their occupants.
3. Markings on the ground, damage, etc. allegedly caused by UFOs.
4. Physical injuries to witnesses allegedly caused by UFOs.

The Maury Island Case

Strangely enough, as in several other aspects of the UFO mystery, we must consult Arnold's account of his investigations of the alleged Maury Island sighting of 1947 (1) to find the precedent for subsequent reports of physical evidence of UFOs.

The main physical evidence in this case was described as looking like slag, and was said to have been seen falling from a UFO. Some of this material was given to Kenneth Arnold and he kept it in his hotel room during his stay in Tacoma for his investigation of the incident. During his investigations Arnold, who had already called in his friend, Captain Smith, an airline pilot, to assist, felt that he was getting out of his depth with all the mysterious incidents which were apparently occurring and he called in Lieutenant Brown and Captain Davidson, of Military Intelligence.

Brown and Davidson saw the fragments, but, according to Arnold, seemed to suddenly lose interest after one of the witnesses in the case, Fred L. Crisman, offered to go home and get a box of fragments from the UFO to present to the officers. The officers

insisted that they had to get back to their base at Hamilton Field, California and Arnold pleaded with them to stay the night, especially in view of the fact that they were both obviously tired.

Just as the transport arrived to take the officers back to their aircraft at McChord Field, Crisman arrived with a cardboard box full of chunks of material which, Arnold noticed, seemed to be somewhat different from the fragments in his hotel room. The fragments were handed over to Brown and Davidson and they drove away.

The next morning Kenneth Arnold and Captain Smith were horrified to learn that Brown and Davidson were dead. Their aircraft had crashed some twenty minutes after take-off from McChord Field.

Two other men who were in the aircraft had parachuted to safety. One of the survivors told how Brown and Davidson had loaded a heavy cardboard box on to the plane. When one of the engines caught fire and the extinguishing device failed to operate, Lt. Brown ordered him and the flight engineer to jump. It is said that the survivors watched the burning plane for a period of from nine to eleven minutes during their descent. This observation has naturally caused much speculation as to why Brown and Davidson did not jump out.

A local newspaper, the "Tacoma Times", published a sensational report of the tragedy, containing suggestions that the plane had been sabotaged in order to prevent the shipment of flying disc fragments to Hamilton Field.

The next major development, so far as the physical evidence is concerned, in the tortuously complicated story of Arnold's adventures in Tacoma came when Captain Smith went to McChord Field to consult Major Sander of S-2 Army Intelligence, and brought him back to the Tacoma hotel to see Arnold. After hearing everything from Arnold and Smith, Sander remarked that he was positive that the two men were victims of a hoax.

Major Sander then made a remark about the fragments, which were lying on the floor. He started to pick up a few of them and told the two men that he would take them for a drive and show them thousands of tons of the stuff. However, he said that Arnold's fragments would have to be analysed "for the sake of being thorough". He then began to gather the fragments together and insisted that all of the pieces should be handed over to him.

Sander then placed the fragments in the boot of his car and drove Arnold and Smith to a place which was apparently a dumping ground for slag from blast furnaces. The slag looked somewhat like the fragments, but Arnold felt sure that it was not the same sort of material, and Sander did not offer to compare it with the pieces in the boot of his car. Arnold thought that the slag was more like the material he had seen Crisman giving to Brown and Davidson.

Ruppelt refers to the Maury Island case in his book, "The Report on Unidentified Flying Objects". (2) For some obscure reason he gives fictional names to the characters involved and refers to Arnold as "Simpson". He gives the impression that he believes that Ray Palmer, who sent Arnold to investigate the incident for a fee of 200 dollars, was a party to a hoax devised by Crisman and his colleague, Dahl. The official Air Force report on the incident concluded that it was merely a hoax.

Apparently, Palmer had already obtained samples of the original material in question in this case, as well as a sample of the slag. He published analyses of both substances in the book, "The Coming of the Saucers", but, strangely, although he gives a detailed analysis of the slag, only a vague indication of the make-up of the other substance is given, merely indicating the metals said to be present.

After the lapse of over 21 years, it is doubtful if we shall ever know the full and true story behind the events at Tacoma, but the fog of confusion created either deliberately or unintentionally and the peculiar actions of the people involved, together with the failure to publish a proper analysis of the

material in question, is typical of many reports which followed.

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To be continued.

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A brief look at the

SOUTH HERTFORDSHIRE UFO INVESTIGATION GROUP

by Barry W. Woodgate

Interest in the subject of what is termed 'ufology' has been growing for some years; each year introduces new books and magazines the majority of which push the idea of extra-terrestrial visitations. A person becoming interested naturally reads all he or she can from Adamski to Carl Sagan. Some rapidly become convinced that alien beings are visiting us, for good or evil reasons, and therefore do not feel the need to examine the evidence on its merit. Others feel the need for further investigation but find investigating alone becomes very involved and time consuming. This is where the advantages of a local group help out.

If you do not have the advantages of a local group, why not form one? That is what Ray Holmes and the Rev. Wilfred Driskel did. They organised a meeting of people interested in furthering their knowledge of UFOs. This meeting resulted in the formation of the South Hertfordshire UFO Investigation Group. It was in 1967 that Ray Holmes found that the Rev. Wilfred Driskel shared similar interests in the subject of ufology. After many discussions the idea of forming a local study group took shape. Feelers were sent out to various people they felt might be interested: it wasn't long before Ray and Wilfred came to see me. I was extremely interested in the formation of a local group. I offered my support and eagerly awaited the inaugural meeting.

The inaugural meeting was held in January 1968 at the home of Wilfred Driskel. An attendance of 22 was recorded including Gordon Creighton, MA, FRGS, President of BUFORA, and Brian Winder, BSc, C.Eng, AMIMEchE, Vice-president of BUFORA. A Constitution was proposed and accepted. Officials were elected to serve until the AGM, fixed for October '68. Gordon Creighton became our President, Brian Winder Vice-president and Dr Geoffrey Doel Vice-president. Ray Holmes and Wilfred Driskel were elected joint Secretaries; I became Vice-chairman and Press Officer and Dennis Redrup Projects Officer. A chairman was not elected; this gave Group members the opportunity to take the Chair at meetings.

A series of talks was arranged for monthly meetings. These were to acquaint members more intimately with the subject. Talks included Brian Winder's theory on the possible system of propulsion UFOs might employ. Gordon Creighton interested us in accounts of UFO sightings and landings which had taken place in South America. Peter Newman's theory certainly gave us food for thought with the suggestion that UFOs might not be of extra-terrestrial origin. Peter's theory embraced the suggestion that an elite body of scientists, who graduated from the wizards, witches and magicians of the past, could be responsible for conjuring up the UFO. They, it was proposed, operated from our own planet. Norman Oliver gave the Group an insight into a contact case, known

as the 'Scoriton Affair'. I have some comments to make about contact cases later.

There exists within the Group a committee which is responsible for covering local sightings and carrying out investigations. This committee is made up of 8 men, led by our Field Officer, Albert Davy, FRAS. One of the most interesting cases investigated by the committee was the sighting of August 31st /September 1st. This was witnessed by at least a hundred people in parts of Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire. Among the witnesses were three experienced astronomers. The Ministry of Defence explained the sighting as an aircraft carrying out an instrument calibration flight from London Airport. Description of sighting as seen by Dr B.H. Burne, MRCS, LRCP, DPH, the Medical Officer of Health for Amersham: Object seen as white ring with superimposed red triangle in different aspects of the ring at various times. Through binoculars, Dr Burne described the triangle as being a concave cone or a delta shape in three parts. He described its movements as variable, sometimes streaking across the night sky to the left and actually across the moon, and at other times apparently suspended. Many witnesses also gave a description of another object which resembled an aircraft with its landing lights full on; this object is thought to have been the MCD aircraft. The mystery object was also seen to eject a red flowerpot-shaped object, which moved off at high speed. The sighting lasted from 8 p.m. to 1.30 a.m.

Another sighting investigated by the Group concerned an orange, globe-like object. This was seen over Chorleywood, Herts, by at least eight people at three different vantage points; all descriptions tallied. Object was silent and moved steadily across the night sky. After checking many facts a balloon was ruled out. The direction of movement and elevation ruled out the possibility of a satellite. Cloud coverage was 7/8 to 8/8, checked with the Met. Office; witnesses could not see stars. An interesting development occurred whilst the object moved silently over Chorleywood; it was buzzed by aircraft. It also attracted the interest of a searchlight. The Ministry of Defence explanation was Echo 2. One more interesting point, cloud height 2,000/3,000 ft., object not once obscured by cloud.

The investigation committee have many more cases on their files but it is obvious I cannot mention them all. There have been many cases of motor vehicles, excluding diesels, suffering from ignition failure at the reported moment a UFO decides to make an appearance. It occurred to us to enlist the aid of the motoring organizations whose assistance could be of great value. Patrolmen are on duty day and night; they must stand a fair chance of observing any unusual aerial activity, plus we have the co-operation of the R.C to inform us of ignition failures for no apparent reasons. This of course applies only to the area covered by the Group. The possibility could exist where we might be able to link a reported sighting with the breakdown of a vehicle, or vehicles.

After listening to Norman Oliver's account of his investigation concerning a contact, I personally felt a little worried. Norman and his co-investigator seemed to become emotionally involved with the whole case. I won't go into the 'Scoriton Affair', but I would like to go on record as saying I believe it was a hoax, and as for the messages or riddles Norman received, which led him on so many wild-goose chases, I cannot believe these were the products of an advanced brain! I have mentioned this case for a reason; I believe contact cases would be better investigated if the investigations were carried out by a group.

I believe one or two independent investigators could be swayed by the apparent integrity of a good hoaxer and by the will to believe, although they may not be conscious of this. I also feel

that an investigation by a group whose aims are to make contact with UFO occupants would leave a lot to be desired. When I say I would like a group to investigate contact cases, I obviously do not mean the whole group to descend upon the witness or contactee. An investigation committee on the lines of SHUFOIG would be better equipped to deal with such a case, and all their findings would be reported to the group. If an evaluation was to be made then it would be the result of a group meeting.

SHUFOIG are now forming a projects committee whose functions will be from building UFO detectors to organizing sky-watches. We would like to hear of projects other groups are engaged upon. Perhaps we could help. If any groups are planning a sky-watch we will be pleased to co-operate. A group bulletin will shortly be published. This will provide group news, sighting reports, articles and information in general. Contributions from other groups will always be welcomed. The bulletin will be available on an exchange basis; individual copies will be available at nominal cost. We are fortunate in having as our editor Miss Janet Gregory.

SHUFOIG now has a membership of 67. This is a very good achievement considering we have only been in existence for just a year. Albert Davy, FRAS, and Graham Williams, FRAS, are to undertake the forming of SHUFOIG northern branch. Interest has been aroused in North Herts and the surrounding area, and SHUFOIG Committee feel a northern section, organized by Albert and Graham, would be of benefit. If any group would like to correspond with SHUFOIG please write to B.W.Woodgate, 51 Kindersley Way, Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire.

On behalf of the South Herts UFO Investigation Group, I would like to wish all UFO investigators and research groups a very rewarding new year.

THE TUNGUSKA METEORITE

by Alan W. Sharp

At 7.17 a.m. on 30th June, 1908, travellers on the Trans-Siberian Railway and other witnesses saw an enormous bolide cross the sky in a SSE to NNW direction, leaving behind it a thick and persistent trail which hung in the atmosphere like a pall. Immediately after the object disappeared from view the flash of an explosion was observed on the horizon and a gigantic pillar of smoke rose high in the air where it remained for a considerable time before dispersing. Several detonations were heard, although the exact number is uncertain due to conflicting stories from different witnesses. These persons also gave varying details of the final fireball, the duration of which is hence in considerable doubt.

Seismic waves and air waves were recorded in many parts of the world, including England, and computations of the energy involved in the final explosion indicate that some 10^{24} ergs were released, equivalent to an atomic device of about 20 megatons.

This is the sort of energy assumed for the 4,000 ft. Arizona meteorite crater which Baldwin has ascribed to a nickel-iron meteorite 130 feet in diameter travelling at 10 miles per second; very little more than the escape velocity of the Earth.

Unfortunately, when the first expedition reached the site of the Tunguska events almost 20 years after they occurred, no large meteorite crater was found, nor has one come to light since then, despite very thorough investigation. This is the

mystery of the Podkamennaya Tunguska which has puzzled scientists for decades and to explain which many theories have been proposed, the latest being the explosion of a nuclear-powered spaceship or UFO which burned up after plunging out of control into the Earth's atmosphere.

Other possibilities are an encounter with a large lump of anti-matter, with the nucleus of a comet, with a big stone meteorite, or with an iron meteorite whose impact crater has not yet been discovered. These proposals will be considered in reverse order starting with an iron meteorite in the 100 ft. plus range of sizes, or an equivalent aggregate of smaller bodies.

Quite simply the argument against this suggestion rests on two facts, the absence of any impact crater or craters and the absence of any sizeable pieces of nickel-iron, such as are found, for example, in the vicinity of the Arizona crater.

The main explosion point of the Tunguska "meteorite" lies in a region called the South Swamp, a depression about 6 miles long by 3 miles wide but seemingly quite natural in origin. The word "in" is not to be taken literally, for the absence of a crater means that the explosion must have occurred in the air and therefore that whatever object caused it did not reach the ground intact.

Hence we must turn to the next possibility, a "stony" meteorite of some kind, perhaps with some content of free iron. It is well known that such material occurs and forms the major aggregate of normal extraterrestrial objects which survive passage through the Earth's atmosphere in megascopic form. Much of it is friable and easily disrupted, and generally explodes upon reaching the denser part of our atmosphere. No pieces of stony meteorite have been picked up on the site, however, though this may have been due to the considerable lapse of time between the fall and the investigations on the spot.

Small silicate spherules have been found in abundance in the area, however, together with small spherules of magnetite. These particles allegedly originated in the colliding body, though it is generally accepted that meteoric iron usually occurs uncombined with oxygen as magnetite, except in the fusion crust produced by passage through the atmosphere where oxidation takes place. If the spherules did indeed come from a meteorite it is nevertheless surprising that they should be the only surviving evidence of its composition.

This difficulty led to the third theory, that of cometary impact, which has appealed largely because of the unsatisfactory evidence for a more normal intruder, rather than for any compelling positive evidence in its support. No comet was seen in the Earth's vicinity prior to the event, and in any case the precise nature of cometary nuclei is still a matter for speculation. The lack of sizeable remnants of non-ices from the nucleus remains unexplained although the million tons or so of finely divided particles which produced extended twilight for two months after the explosion could have been non-stony in character, in accordance with some modern theories of cometary nuclear composition. This supposition is unsatisfactory.

Still searching for a convincing explanation we reach our last two postulates, anti-matter and space-craft engine explosions.

Both of these fail for the reason that the ground phenomena are not in accordance with a suitably sized atomic or nuclear event. The radiation-damaged and blast-damaged areas should have been interchanged to fit in with either of these two suggestions but in fact the effects are precisely the opposite to

what would be expected. No cases of radiation sickness or deaths were ever reported and the evidence of extra carbon 14 in some 1909 tree rings is conflicting and very much post hoc ergo propter hoc in nature.

R.V.Gentry has written:

"Cowen et al. report an increase equivalent to about 1% in some tree rings around 1909, but Suess finds no change whatever in another sample. These results are consistent with the hypothesis that the Tunguska meteor was entirely anti-matter in content."

Then, after some tentative calculations:-

"The observations of an eye-witness to the Tunguska meteor explosion are significant at this point. As Cowen et al. point out, the fireball did not last long. S.B.Semenov, an observer, just managed to lower his eyes as the explosion occurred, and when he looked again the fireball had disappeared. The account of Kosolopov in the same connection has similar implications. This relatively short duration fireball (presumably only several seconds) is difficult to reconcile with the 33 sec. fireball to be expected from an ordinary 30 megaton thermonuclear explosion (the calculated equivalent yield of the Tunguska burst). It definitely appears that the relatively short duration fireball is reasonable evidence against the Tunguska explosion being thermonuclear in nature."

Of all the hypotheses examined here only the second or third--stony meteorite or cometary encounter--are valid possibilities and of these the former appeals more than the latter, which seems to be something of a counsel of despair.

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DESIGN AND LAYOUT OF UFO JOURNALS

by John A. Rimmer

The editorial of the last issue of MUFOB commented on the alleged stodginess of the design and layout of the FSR. However our strictures were ill-timed, as the latest issue of FSR bears a new cover designed by Pauline Bowen, as well as some improvements in the internal layout. Looking at the new cover with its distinctive logo and straightforward use of illustrations, one wonders why other UFO publications appear to have difficulty in presenting a well-designed format.

Whilst most bulletins and journals are small duplicated affairs there is little that can be done, except to maintain the highest standards of typing and duplicating. However an increasing number of journals are being printed by the photo-litho method, which allows almost complete freedom of design and illustration. Unfortunately, with this freedom magazine editors appear to go completely haywire, filling their pages with as many different kinds of lettering, headings, illustrations and assorted ornaments and arabesques as they can. It is an axiom in design that the greater the freedom the printing process affords, the greater is the need for restraint in design. Simple arrangements of text and illustrations, tight control of typefaces used for headings, and a resistance to the impulse to put something in just to fill up the space, are prime requisites for anyone attempting to design their own UFO magazine.

The design of UFO literature is not just some academic problem, but a subject that is very relevant to the work of UFO editors. It is perhaps unfortunate, but true, that the appearance of a magazine conditions to a considerable extent which people will read it. The typical UFO periodical, looking like a cross between a nineteen-forties copy of "Amazing Stories" and the local college rag-nag, may be lapped up avidly by the aficionado, but is hardly likely to be appreciated by the interested outsider.

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SKYWATCHING AND SELF-DECEPTION

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All critical students of the UFO phenomena will be aware of the credulity and self-deception which often afflict those who indulge in the pastime known as skywatching. For the benefit of those who tend to attach too much weight to skywatch UFO reports we quote the following paragraphs from SIUFOP Newsletter (1).

"Knowing little about the subject of "Unidentified Flying Objects" or "Flying Saucers" when it was formed, the Society realised, after interviewing a mere handful of people who claimed to have seen UFOs, that nearly all of them had two things in common - a large science fiction library and a vivid imagination.

However, it was considered very probable that something in the sky had triggered off the latter, and so a series of all night sky watches were conducted from various hills around the country in order to try and see a "UFO". Each hill chosen had a history of UFOs even if this was only one or two recent sightings in the vicinity.

"One of the early watches had no sooner started than it was a success. UFOs were seen, six together at one stage. Imaginations exploded (at least mine did). Time exposure photographs were taken and processed in the early hours of the morning. It was several days before it was admitted that the photographs bore little resemblance to the objects seen and it was two weeks before somebody returned to the spot with powerful binoculars and very soberly observed car headlamps on a distant hill - an invaluable lesson in many ways.

"Somewhat wiser, other watches followed, a curious point noted was the number of other people also standing on the tops of hills, looking for UFOs, flying saucers, scout vessels, Sky people, Master ships or pulsators - terms we soon came across during conversations with these watchers. Much of SIUFOP's present UFO knowledge was obtained on these somewhat odd encounters, when aeroplanes, satellites and shooting stars were excitedly pointed out and described as "zig-zagging flying saucers", etc. Although the Society tried to approach each new sighting report with an open mind, scepticism crept in, and being frequently told, "You've just missed a beauty", when arriving on a hill, did not help very much."

Reference (1). "Conclusions After One Year", by D.I.Simpson, SIUFOP Newsletter No.8, November 1968. Editor: A.M.Elliott, 119 Fairfax Road, Teddington, Middlesex.

GUESS WHO? - - No prizes offered

In a recent novel, "The Family Man", by John Gale(1), there is an episode in which the hero of the story, a journalist, is sent down to the West Country to report "unexplained phenomena seen and heard in a small town near Salisbury Plain." He meets various people skywatching on the hills around the town and they suggest that he contact their leader, Dr Mountain Lawless:--

"'Dr Lawless went out last night alone,' said the stockbroker's clerk. 'He kept everybody else back. He sat in a chair and flashed his torch on and off. It might seem peculiar; but if they were wanting to contact anyone, he'd have been a suitable person, sort of thing. Dr Lawless is a doctor of philosophy.'

"'Have the "things" come to rescue us from our plight?' I asked.

"'Well, if they have, they haven't succeeded yet, have they?'

"The young men went in search of Dr Lawless, and later that night we sat with him in the back of a lighted van, while rain drummed on the roof. He was a comfortably-built man of fifty, with a brown face, silver hair, striking grey eyes, tweed coat, and light khaki drill trousers: he looked like a sort of magical farmer....."

Dr Lawless explains his strange activities of the previous night:-

"'Last night I went about half a mile up the field there to one side of the coppice and sat for about an hour in the middle of a triangle of lights. Nothing in particular happened that's worth recording. Really, in some sense, I was trying to prove a negative. We do have a lot of crank elements in this field. If anything had happened I should have been very surprised. I see no reason why these things should come at our beckoning.'"

R (Reference(1). Hodder and Stoughton Ltd, 25/-)

"SILENCERS" IN ENGLAND

Since publishing an article concerning reports of UFO investigators and witnesses being "silenced" we have received only two reports of similar incidents in England.

Mr Brian Leathley-Andrew, of Coventry, started a UFO information bureau in September, 1968, and closed it down a few months later because of strange experiences and incidents. The first disturbing thing that happened was trouble with his telephone when using it for UFO business. This began on the second day after opening his information bureau. When he tried to use the telephone, it either went dead, or he got the engaged signal. This happened about eight or nine times out of ten. Trouble occurred only on outgoing calls connected with UFOs.

The only really odd incoming call was from a man who spoke "perfect text-book English" and refused to give his name. He appeared to be very knowledgeable on the subject of UFOs and asked a number of searching questions. One odd question he asked Mr Leathley-Andrew was if a Coventry woman had been in touch with him to tell him that she had seen aliens working on a space-ship in a Coventry factory.

Another incident occurred during a visit to a house on UFO business, when the lights dimmed several times. Mr Leathley-Andrew, a radio and television engineer, regards this as being very unusual and connects it with the other odd incidents.

The final straw came when Mr Leathley-Andrew was working on the underside of his car one evening. He came out from under the car to get something when he suddenly noticed something looking like a person, except that its head was glowing red, like a neon light. As he watched the apparition the head changed to that of an old man. It then walked away, but Mr Leathley-Andrew was in no condition to follow it. Greatly concerned, he took this as a warning to cease his UFO investigations and he burned his notes on the subject that evening. Strangely enough, he apparently cannot remember the date of this startling incident. It seems it was a Sunday evening between late September and early November.

Mr Leathley-Andrew is quoted in the Coventry Evening Telegraph as saying: "I want to publicly warn all teenage hobbyists that this is nothing to dabble in lightly."

Meanwhile, there has been trouble in the Slough Aerial Phenomena Research Association. Several members have been visited by two men who asked questions about the group. They asked about sky-watch activities, membership, finances and other members. On one of their visits they said they were from the "IMW", whatever that may be.

Apparently, their questionings and telephone calls were supposed to alarm members and one of the members, Mr S.G. Salter, believes that the whole business is merely a hoax. His opinion is that some local people have been reading too many "MIB books". Mr Salter points out that hoaxes have been played on the group before, so most members are naturally sceptical.

A number of members have left the group: this is not because of the mysterious visitors, but because of an internal difference of opinion. Such differences are, of course, inevitable and quite common in organizations which deal with subjects as contentious as ufology.

There does not, on the face of it, appear to be anything particularly mysterious about the incidents in the Slough group. The experiences of Mr Leathley-Andrew do not seem so startling when examined critically. The episode of the dimming lights is not very convincing. Even if it is unusual there would seem to be no logical reason to connect it with UFOs. Also, it is strange that he cannot remember the date of his startling vision of the being with the glowing head. So far as the telephone troubles are concerned, we would need more details in order to evaluate them. Whatever the explanation of Mr Leathley-Andrew's experiences, there is no reason to doubt his sincerity.

"Silencers" in England: Acknowledgements to Dennis Llewellyn, of Stratford-upon-Avon Branch of BUFORA, S.G. Salter, of Slough Aerial Phenomena Research Association, Barry W. Woodgate, of South Hertfordshire UFO Investigation Group, and David Abbott, of UFO Information Bureau, Northampton, for information and press cuttings.

North Sea UFO Mystery

On January 10, mysterious distress signals coincided with an unidentified blip on radar screens. Radio messages picked up at The Hague said the position of the aircraft was given as 22 miles off Flamborough Head. Humber radio reported the height of the aircraft as 30,000 feet. No known aircraft, civil or military were reported to be in that area.

At Lindholme, radar observers saw objects crossing the North Sea. They appeared to land in North Lincolnshire.

Police on the Yorkshire and Lincolnshire coastline ordered road patrols to maintain an aerial watch and ships in the North Sea were asked to keep a look-out for wreckage. Nothing was found and the object remained unidentified.

A spokesman at Preston Air Traffic Control said: "Virtually all sightings of this kind are accidents resulting from the extreme sensitivity of our instruments." In London a Defence Ministry spokesman said several freak contacts had been picked up on radar screens which could have been wreckage falling out of the sky, but no British civilian or military aircraft was unaccounted for.

(Sources: Liverpool Echo, 10/1/69; Guardian, 11/1/69; Daily Mail, 11/1/69)

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